

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELGRA 02663 031232Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 /021 W
-----085139 040311Z /75

R 031150Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO USDOC WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6111
AMCONSUL ZAGREB

UNCLAS BELGRADE 2663

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BENC, YO
SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECTS: RAILROADS

REF: A) STATE 52906 B) BELGRADE 2296

1. EMBASSY COMMERCIAL ATTACHE AND ECON/COMMERCIAL OFFICER MET WITH OFFICIALS OF YUGOSLAV ASSOCIATION OF RAILROADS TO DISCUSS EXPANSION PLANS TO BE REALIZED BY 5TH IBRD LOAN FOR DOLLARS 100 MILLION. PLANS CALL FOR ELECTRIFICATION OF 250 KILOMETERS OF RAIL LINE AND RECONSTRUCTION OF 1,000 KILOMETERS OF TRACK. ENTIRE AMOUNT OF LOAN WILL BE USED FOR PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT AND RAILS, WITH CONSTRUCTION AND INSTALLATION FINANCED FROM DOMESTIC SOURCES. TENTATIVE TIMETABLE IS AS FOLLOWS: (A) MAY 1978 - ISSUE TENDER FOR RAILS, TIES AND POINTS, (B) JUNE - SEPTEMBER 1978 - ISSUE TENDER FOR ELECTRIFICATION, (C) OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1978 - SELECT SUPPLIERS, (D) 1979- EARLY 1980 - DELIVER EQUIPMENT,, (E) END 1980 - EARLY 1981 - COMPLETE ALL CONSTRUCTION AND INSTALLATION.

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL BE PUBLISHED BY THE YUGOSLAV ASSOCIATION OF RAILROADS IN THE APPROPRIATE UNITED NATIONS BULLETIN, INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY GAZETTE AND THE YUGOSLAV OFFICIAL GAZETTE. EMBASSY WILL RECEIVE SEPARATE NOTICE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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ANNOUNCEMENT. FIRMS CAN OFFER TO SUPPLY MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT FOR SEGMENT OF PROJECT IN ON REGION OR ENTIRE PROJECT.

2. WEST EUROPEAN COMPANIES - PARTICULARLY FRENCH, WEST GERMAN, ITALIAN AND BRITISH - ARE ALREADY WELL ESTABLISHED IN RAIL EQUIPMENT MARKET AND YUGOSLAV INTEREST IN STANDARDIZING EQUIPMENT THROUGHOUT RAIL SYSTEM WILL GIVE THEM COMPETITIVE

EDGE IN BIDDING. HOWEVER, U.S. RAIL EQUIPMENT ASIDE FROM LOCOMOTIVES IS NOT WELL KNOWN. OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED THAT TO EXTENT US FIRMS CAN OFFER SUPERIOR TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS WHICH ARE COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING EQUIPMENT, RAILROADS WOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO SWITCHING SUPPLIERS. THERE IS PARTICULAR INTEREST IN US REMOTE CONTROL EQUIPMENT FOR ELECTRIFIED LINES AND COMPUTERIZED TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS, ESPECIALLY FOR MARSHALLING YARDS. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT ONE WAY FOR US FIRM TO BREAK INTO MARKET WOULD BE TO ENTER INTO LONG-TERM TECHNICAL OR CO-PRODUCTION AGREEMENT WITH YUGOSLAV MANUFACTURER. PRINCIPAL YUGOSLAV SUPPLIERS OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT FOR RAILROADS ARE ISKAR, KRANJ AND ELEKTRONSKA INDUSTRIJA, NIS. OTHER SUPPLIERS INCLUDE ENERGOINVEST, MINEL, RADE KONCAR, ELEKTROMONTAZA AND ZELJEZARA SISAK.

3. INVESTMENT PLANS ARE NOW BEING DRAWN UP FOR ANTICIPATED 6TH IBRD LOAN. EMPHASIS WILL BE ON EXPANDING AND IMPROVING EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE. IN ADDITION TO EXTENDING ELECTRIFIED LINES, SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENT WILL ALSO BE MADE IN NEW CONTAINERIZATION FACILITIES AND MODERNIZATION OF MARSHALLING YARDS THROUGH COMPUTERIZED TRAFFIC CONTROL, TWO AREAS IN WHICH US FIRMS SHOULD HAVE GOOD SALES PROSPECTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BELGRA02663
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780144-0538
Format: TEL
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197804101/aaaadhso.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 014f35a6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 52906, 78 BELGRADE 2296
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2819638
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR PROJECTS: RAILROADS
TAGS: BENC, YO
To: COM
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/014f35a6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014